



## Town of Warren, Rhode Island

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# Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on April 15, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at George Hail Library, located at 520 Main Street.\* The presiding officer was Karen Dionne. Board members present were Sara Volino, Christine Lichatz Moe Clare, Spencer Morris and Mark Lombari. Ex officio member Caroline Wells was present. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB. Sandy Meaders was present at the meeting as a guest.

*\*meeting will be held on the second floor of the George Hail Library while renovations are being done to the basement of the Town Hall*

### **1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of March 18, 2013**

The minutes from the regular meeting held on March 18, 2013 were reviewed by the board via email. A motion was made by Mr. Clare to accept the minutes from the regular meeting of March 18th, the motion was seconded and all members were in favor.

### **2. Review of current projects with Caroline Wells, Town Planner**

Ms. Wells reviewed the status of the Downtown Storefront Improvement program with the Board. Ms. Wells asked the Board to help promote the program, and asked the Board to keep in mind that the application must be reviewed by her office as well as the state Rhode Island Preservation Office. Some private business owners have shown in interest in incorporating artwork into the exterior designs of their business; Ms. Wells discussed the need to distinguish between public art and signage or advertising. Ms. Wells stated she would like to encourage business owners to participate in the storefront program if they are interested in incorporating art into their business storefronts because the town could offer design guidance. Ms. Wells asked the Board to help promote the program. The funds will be available in approximately six to eight weeks and is available for businesses in the 305 census tract.

The CDGB funds previously used for a work force development program will be reallocated for a new program with New Urban Farmers, who offer a farmer training program in Pawtucket. The group will mentor ten individuals from Warren who meet the low to moderate income criteria. They will be mentored through the whole growing season and will learn skills about being food producers and distributors.

Ms. Wells discussed the improvement of the bike path between Franklin Streets and Child Streets. She sees this area as a natural area for improvement because it links Child Street and its proximity to local businesses to the park and ride on Franklin Street. She discussed the need for improved wayfaring signage at the kiosk as well as bike shelters, bike lids or locally designed and produced steel bike racks. There is a DEM matching funds grant available to improve the area; Ms. Wells will send Ms. Dionne a copy of her application for the grant. The board also discussed the park and ride on Franklin Street; Ms. Wells would like to channel more of the bike path users to Franklin Street. She also mentioned that RIPTA is looking for an additional Park and Ride site on Metacom Avenue; Job Lot Plaza is a potential site.

Ms. Wells left the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

### **3. Report from wayfaring signage work group**

Ms. Dionne reported that the signage work group had a recent meeting and that the work group is ready to start Phase II, Wayfaring Signage. The gateway signage is almost completely installed. The work group will meet to discuss new ideas for wayfaring signage and incorporating wayfaring signage into the bike path improvement project. Ms. Wells requested the EDB to coordinate with the Conservation Committee on plantings for the new gateway signs; Ms. Lichatz has ideas for the planting and will connect with the Conservation Committee. Ms. Dionne stated that Bill Nash, the town zoning official, will be attending EDB meetings in the future and will serve as the town liaison to the Board.

### **4. Update from downtown cleanup workgroup**

Ms. Lichatz and Mr. Clare are coordinating efforts to improve the appearance of downtown businesses and municipal buildings including Town Hall and George Hail Library. The group discussed potential efforts to prevent the use of public rubbish receptacles by private property owners (i.e. tenants from multi-family dwellings) on Main Streets and Market Streets.

### **5. Update from transportation workgroup**

This issue was discussed as part of the first agenda with Ms. Wells. Mr. Terry contributed further information about the O'Grady Bill, which proposes to change the source of RIPTA funding source from the gas tax to the annual transportation budget. Mr. Terry will contact State Representative Malik regarding the support of this bill.

### **6. Discussion of coordination of Earth Day cleanup**

Sara Volino will contact Jane Harrison regarding the EDB coordinating the promotion of Earth Day on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 on Facebook through Discover Warren and the Warren Preservation Society. The need for all private business owners to clean and maintain the sidewalk in front of their stores was also discussed.

## **7. Discussion of Warren property reevaluations and implications for economic development**

A motion was made to adjourn by Ms. Lichatz, the motion was seconded by Ms. Volino, and all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

April 12, 2013

